cution of electrification projects leading to considerable cost escalation and resultant increase in the cost of electrification; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Rajdhani Express between New Delhi and Madras

*151. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY:
SHRI K. GOPALAN:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce a Superfast Rajdhani Express between New Delhi and Madras and if so, what are the details thereof; and

(b) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD): (a) There is no such proposal at present.

(b) Unlike Delhi-Howrah and Delhi-Bombay route, Delhi-Madras is too long to be covered by an overnight train.

Ills of Indian shipping industry

*152. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether delay by Government agencies in approving ship acquisition proposals, avoidable licensing control, lack of professional management among shipping companies and outdated fleet composition are responsible for the ills of the Indian Shipping industry; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken by Government to restore the shipping industry to normal health?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) and (b) World-wide recession in shipping is the main factor that has affected the Indian shipping companies.

The recent measures taken by the Government to revive shipping industry include providing financial assistance to viable shipping companies through rehabilitation proposals, helping shipping companies in getting increased share of Indian cargo, simplifying procedures for acquisition and scrapping of vessels, encouraging acquisition of specialised, modern fuel-efficient vessels etc. The guidelines framed by the Government with the help of Shipping Credit & Investment Company of India Limited for rehabilitation of viable Private Sector shipping companies include moratorium on repayment of loans, interest holiday for a limited period, rescheduling the repayments of loans etc. These measures would help the potentially viable shipping companies to overcome the adverse effects of the long global recession and lead to the creation of a stronger and financially viable shipping industry.

Programme to promote equality for women

*153. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY:
SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to launch a pilot programme to promote equality for women in the country;

(b) if so, what are the details of the proposal; and

(c) what are the names of the States where such a programme is likely to be launched in the near future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

(SHRI L. P. SHAHI): (a) to (c) There is no pilot project but attempt at implementation of National Education Policy. A Statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

The National Policy on Education 1986 has stated that "Education will be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women". For the implementation of this resolve, the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Education) has taken up, through the State Governments concerned, a Project entitled "Education for Women's Equality". It is being implemented in four districts of UP and three districts each of Gujarat and Karnataka. The Project envisages (i) provision of basic support services to women through the programmes of relevant Departments; (ii) reorientation of teachers, adult education/nonformal education instructors and the supervisory and administrative personnel in accordance with the concepts of Education for Women's Equality; (iii) establishment of Women's Activity Centres in villages to increase participation of women in development programmes in general, and, in particular, in educational programmes; (iv) several other measures to increase women's access to education; (v) establishment of condensed courses for education and training of rural women; (vi) expansion of vocational courses for women; and (vii) involvement of voluntary agencies and women's activist groups in training and in providing a support system to the programme.

Chattopadhya Committee on National Policy on Library and Information System

*154. SHRI KAPIL VERMA:

SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Chattopadhya Committee on National Policy on Library and Information System has proposed the setting up of a national network of public libraries and information system in the country;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and the action taken thereon;

(c) whether the committee has also suggested a 10 per cent allocation for library funds; and

(d) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI L. P. SHAHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Details of the proposal are given in the enclosed Statement (*See* below). As regards action thereon, the Government of India set up an Empowered Committee to examine the practical implications of the National Policy on Library and Information System in all its aspects and draw up an action plan for implementation of the same. The report of the Empowered Committee has been received very recently and is yet to be examined.

(c) The Committee has proposed that the Central as well as State Governments should provide for an expenditure of 6—10 per cent of their education budgets for the libraries.

(d) As stated in (b) above.

Statement

Recommendations of the Committee on National Policy on Library and Information System regading the Public Library System

1. The most important task before the Government is to establish, maintain and strengthen the free public libraries in the country and enable them to work as a system.

2. The main thrust in this area should go to the rural public library. A village or a village cluster with an adequate population should have a community library which will also serve as an information centre. Resources of different agencies engaged in the work of public health,